(c) The ICAR has no plan to set up any agricultural research institute on dairy, goat, sheep and mushroom cultivation in Orissa during the current year.

Market access for farm exports

3538. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian agriculture has become increasingly non-competitive in the world market because of heavy subsidization by the developed countries; and

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken or propose to take to ensure greater market access for its farm exports abroad?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) The competitiveness of commodities depend on various factors including cost of production, quality, consumers' preferences, etc. It may, thus, not be correct to attribute in general the uncompetitiveness of all agricultural products only to the heavy subsidization in the developed countries. However, keeping in view the trade disortive nature of subsidies provided in the developed countries, India, in its negotiating proposal submitted to the World Trade Organisation (WTO), has sought enhanced market access for its farm products by demanding a substantial reduction in tariffs and elimination of export subsidies and substantial reduction in domestic support by the developed countries.

(b) Policy of exports of agricultural products forms an integral part of the Export / Import Policy of the country. The policy regarding the exports of agricultural products is governed principally by the concerns of India's food security, maximising farm incomes and earning foreign exchange. Review of export performance of agricultural products is an ongoing process, and accordingly, policy interventions are made as and when considered necessary with a view to making agricultural exports increasingly viable. The long-term Export Policy lays stress on the promotion of agricultural exports. The Policy envisages the creation of Agri. Export Zones for the end to end development for export of specific products from a geographically contiguous area. These zones are to be identified by the respective State Governments who would also evolve a comprehensive package of services such as provision of pre-/ post-harvest treatment and operations, plant protection, processing, storage and related research and development. The agro sector can also avail of the

Exim Policy Schemes like Duty Exemption Scheme and Export Capital Goods Scheme. The recent Exim Policy announced by the Government on the 31st March, 2001, also envisages the entitlement of Agri exporters for recognition as Export House / Trading House / Star Trading House / Super Star Trading House on achieving l/3rd of the threshold limit prescribed for exports of other goods.

Disaster management centres

3539. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the first disaster management centre has recently been commissioned in the national capital;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether such centres have come up in other States too;

(d) if so, the names thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) and (b) As per information received from the Government of NCT of Delhi, a Disaster Management Centre was commissioned at Nehru Place Fire Station of Delhi Fire Service by providing a crane, ambulance, rescue tender and a unit containing rescue equipment to be managed by a team of personnel from Delhi Police.

(c) to (e) No information is available from other States for having a similar setup, but all the States have a mechanism to respond to disasters, which is a coordinated effort of all responders.

Purchasing power of working class in agricultural sector

3540. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH LALAN':

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that purchasing power of the working class in agricultural sector has gone down in previous years in the country;

(b) if not, what is Government's assessment in this regard;